

ASIA-PACIFIC PARLIAMENTARY FORUM (APPF)

24TH ANNUAL MEETING

RESOLUTION APPF24/RES.22

ENSURING WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION AT ALL LEVELS OF POLITICAL AND PUBLIC LIFE

(Sponsored by New Zealand, Canada and Indonesia)

The 24th Annual Meeting of the Asia Pacific Parliamentary Forum;

Recognizing that women's participation in political and public life is a human right, the fulfillment of which can strengthen peace, prosperity and social cohesion in the Asia-Pacific region and worldwide;

Being aware that the principle of equal opportunity in political and public life is essential to encouraging citizen engagement and crucial to building and sustaining democracy;

Considering that women in the Asia-Pacific region have proven abilities as leaders and agents of change;

Recalling the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, and the United Nations (UN) Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000), 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009), 1960 (2010), 2106 (2013), 2122 (2013) and 2242 (2015) on women, peace and security;

Emphasizing that world leaders have committed to the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which aims to 'leave no one behind', including in the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls, and envisions a world in which all legal, social and economic barriers to women's empowerment have been removed;

Recognizing the initiatives of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) to advance women's representation in leadership and decision-making roles, particularly in the economy;

Reaffirming resolutions adopted by previous Annual Meetings of the Asia-Pacific Parliamentary Forum (APPF) on women's full and effective participation in political and public life;

Welcoming the APPF Meeting of Women Parliamentarians, convened for the first time during the 24th Annual Meeting of the APPF in Vancouver;

Being concerned with the underrepresentation of women in most of the decision-making positions in the legislative, executive, judicial, law enforcement, and private sectors of Asia-Pacific countries;

Recognizing that discriminatory laws and regulations, as well as gender stereotypes, can prevent or restrict women's participation in the political process and marginalize women from political and public life;

Being cognizant of the role that political parties can play in either facilitating or impeding women's participation in the political process, and the impact that a country's electoral system can have on women's representation in elected bodies;

RESOLVES TO:

1. **Uphold** women's empowerment and participation in political and public life as essential elements of civic engagement, democracy, peace and prosperity;
2. **Call on** APPF Member States and APPF Parliaments to ensure the equal rights of women and men, and to monitor the national implementation of laws and regulations to ensure their consistency with State obligations under international human rights and gender equality instruments;
3. **Consider** specific measures – including quotas, targeted recruitment initiatives, civic education and/or awareness campaigns – that can achieve gender balance in the legislative and executive branches of government and the judiciary, as well as women's involvement in decision-making roles in those same bodies;
4. **Encourage** Member State Parliaments and parties to adopt policies and procedures that promote and respect diversity and that ensure equal opportunities for participation of all ethnic, cultural and gender groups respecting diversity;
5. **Call on** APPF Member States to ensure that women have equal access to high-quality education, training and skills-development opportunities, and financial resources;

6. **Promote** awareness among women, through education, mentorship and campaigns, of the political, social and business networks, the training, and the financial support that are available to them;
7. **Appeal** to political parties in the APPF region to review and reform candidate recruitment processes with the view to removing barriers that limit women's participation in those processes and to increasing the number of female party candidates;
8. **Recommend** that APPF Parliaments utilize research and data to inform policy developments and legislative responses to gender-related issues, including violence against women and children, trafficking in persons, health, education and employment;
9. **Encourage** APPF Parliaments to establish cross-party parliamentary groups or caucuses to ensure Parliaments raise gender equality issues and promote legislation;
10. **Call upon** APPF Parliaments to provide training to their legislators to inform them of the scope, causes and effects of family violence, and encourage men and women parliamentarians to work together to pursue legislative reform and hold governments to account in complying with international and regional commitments to gender equality;
11. **Promote** gender-mainstreaming throughout all parliamentary work and structures, supported by the effective training of parliamentarians and parliamentary staff on gender-based analysis and the collection of sex-disaggregated data that is made available to all parliamentarians;
12. **Appeal** to all APPF Parliaments to include a proportionate number of women as members of their delegations to all APPF Annual Meetings, and to ensure that gender perspectives are reflected in the resolutions adopted by Annual Meetings of the APPF;
13. **Invite** the APPF Executive Committee to report to each Annual Meeting on the inclusion of women in all delegations participating in that Annual Meeting;
14. **Recommend** that the APPF Meeting of Women Parliamentarians become a permanent fixture of APPF Annual Meetings and be reflected in the APPF *Rules of Procedure*.